



## Mexican American Bar Association of Los Angeles County

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Mr. Curt Pedersen, Chair  
Boundary Review Committee  
500 West Temple, Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Chair Pederson and Members of the L.A. County Boundary Review Committee:

The Mexican American Bar Association of Los Angeles County ("MABA") strongly supports the adoption of a redistricting plan that contains two Latino majority districts. This position is based on the recent release of census data showing that Latinos represent 65% of the overall growth in Los Angeles County. In fact, in the past ten years, the Latino population in LA County has grown by approximately 445,000, whereas the entire non-Latino County population only grew only by approximately 300,000.

Founded in 1959, MABA represents the interests of more than 1,000 attorneys, judges, and law students throughout Los Angeles County. Since its inception, MABA has been a champion for civil rights and the empowerment of the Latino community. MABA opposes discrimination, and seeks to ensure that Latinos have equal opportunities to lead and govern. As a result, MABA is particularly interested in ensuring that Latinos are able to fairly elect their representatives. In this regard, we believe that adopting a plan with two Latino districts follows (and necessarily avoids potentially violating) Section 2 of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1973, *as amended in 2006*, Public Law 109-246, 120 Stat. 577.

Because of the clear, undeniable growth of its Latino population, Los Angeles County must be vigilant in adopting a plan that avoids the wrongs of the not too distant past. In the *Garza* litigation, the U.S. District Court Judge made the following specific findings after a three-month trial:

179. The continued fragmentation of the Hispanic vote was a reasonably foreseeable consequence of the adoption of the 1981 Plan.
180. The Court finds that during the 1981 redistricting process, the Supervisors knew that the protection of their five Anglo incumbencies was inextricably linked to the continued fragmentation of the Hispanic Core.

**"Committed to the Empowerment of the Latino Community"**

181. The Supervisors appear to have acted primarily on the political instinct of self-preservation. The Court finds, however, that that the Supervisors also intended what they knew to be the likely result of their actions and a prerequisite to self-preservation -- the continued fragmentation of the Hispanic Core and the dilution of Hispanic voting strength.

*Garza v. Los Angeles County et al.*, 918 F. 2d 763, 768 (9th Cir. 1991). These findings were upheld by the Ninth Circuit. *Id.* at 771. In fact, the Ninth Circuit recognized that "after the 1982 amendment, the Voting Rights Act can be violated by both intentional discrimination in the drawing of district lines and facially neutral apportionment schemes that have the effect of diluting minority votes." *Id.*, at 766-67 ("To the extent that a redistricting plan deliberately minimizes minority political power, it may violate both the Voting Rights Act and the Equal Protection Clause of the fourteenth amendment.") (citing *Mobile v. Bolden*, 446 U.S. 55, 66-67 (1980)).

The data before this Committee confirms that Latino population cores are being fragmented between supervisorial districts without justification. Therefore, to prevent further dilution for the growing number of Latinos, Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act requires that LA County adopt a plan that corrects, rather than continues, that historic fragmentation. Adopting such a plan is not only necessary but proper. *See Garza*, at 776 ("The deliberate construction of minority controlled voting districts is exactly what the Voting Rights Act authorizes. Such districting, whether worked by a court or by a political entity in the first instance, does not violate the constitution." *Citing United Jewish Organizations v. Carey*, 430 U.S. 144 (1977)).

On behalf of our Board of Directors, MABA strongly urges your commission to follow the law and recommend a plan with two Latino majority districts. We thank you for your careful attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me through our Office or directly at (818) 486-7964.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victor M. Acevedo", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Victor M. Acevedo  
President